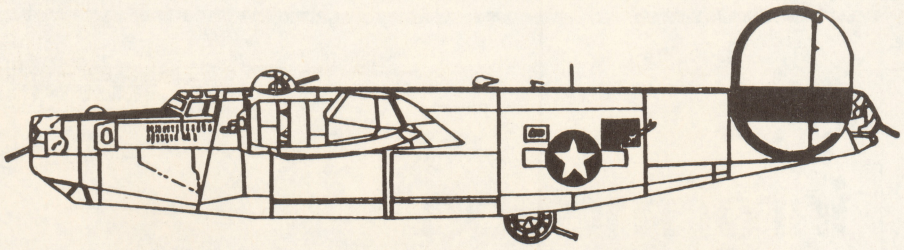
YANKEE AIR FORCE



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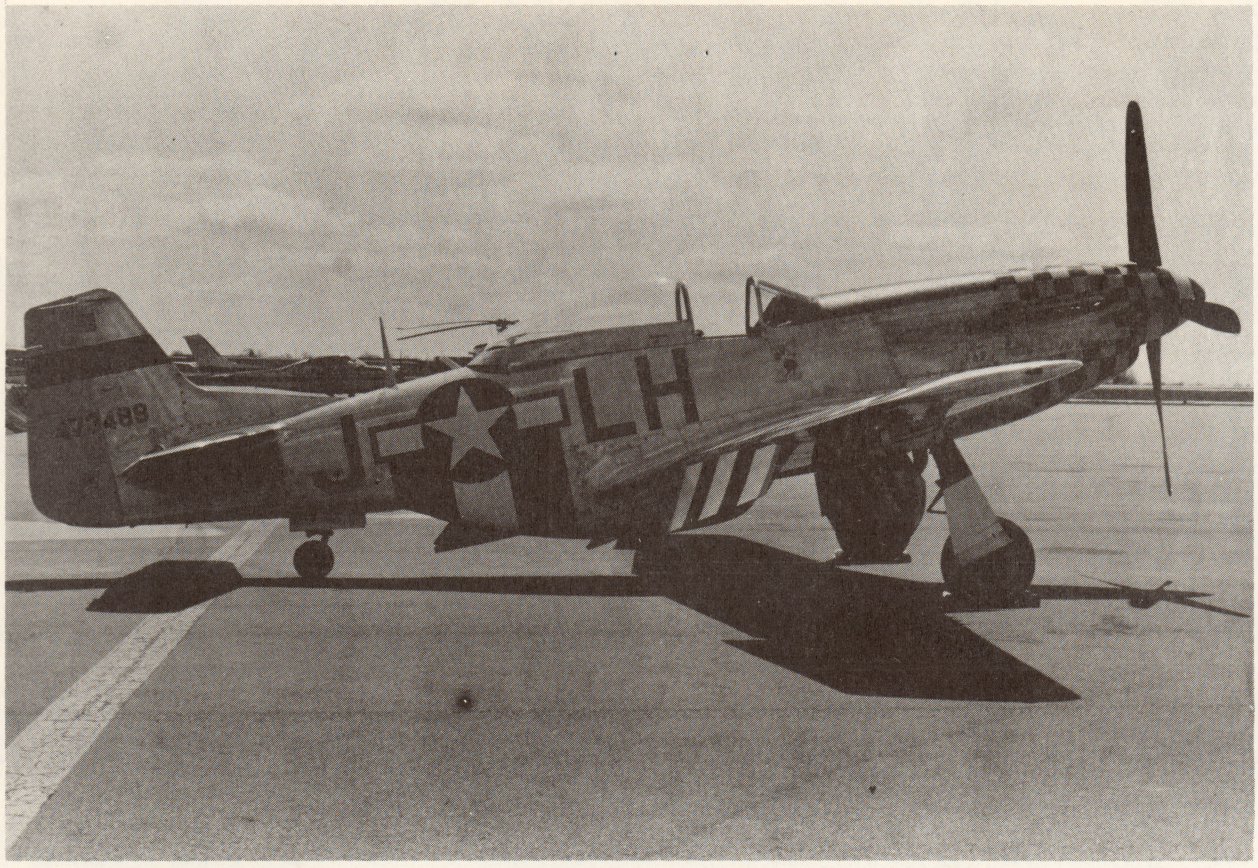
YAF Flightline
Hangar Talk

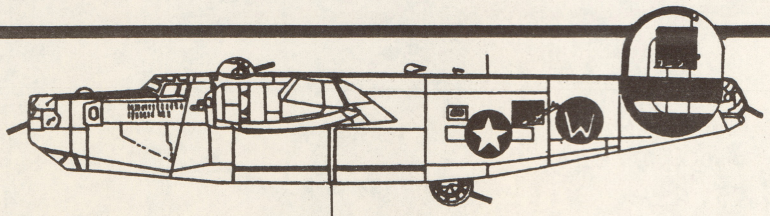


Mid-Michigan Dedication/Fly-In

yankee air force news

Volume 2, No. 7 JULY 1983

Club Information



YANKEE AIR FORCE NEWSLETTER

The official publication of the Yankee Air Force Inc.

Published monthly for the Yankee Air Force Hangar 2041, A Street, Willow Run Airport, P.O. Box 1100, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. Yankee Air Force Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Michigan, and exempt from taxation under IRS Codes Section 501 (C) (3). All copy and advertisements must reach the above address by the 15th of the month, for publication in the following newsletter.

Editor ..... Phil Syler
Calendar ..... Dennis Norton
Hangar Talk ..... Frank Modlinski
Aircraft Reports ..... Jim Hanford
Photographs ..... Stan Reich
Publication
Advisor ..... Dennis Norton

Limited space available for advertisements: Rates; 1" ad, $15.00 per issue or $165.00 in advance for a full year. 2" ad, $25.00 per issue or $275.00 in advance for a full year. Subscriptions available for $6.00 U.S. currency per year mailed within the United States and Canada. $9.00 per year mailed outside the U.S. and Canada. Write Yankee Air Force Newsletter, P.O. Box 1100, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

YANKEE AIR FORCE MEMBERSHIPS

Annual Membership ..... $ 25
Annual Membership - Spouse 10
Life Membership - (individual) 500
Senior Life Membership (over 60) 250
Corporate Membership - Minimum Annual Dues 500
Initiation Fee (one time fee paid by each new member upon joining) 10

Renewals must be received within 30 days after expiration, or member must renew as a new member with initiator fee.

YAF HEADQUARTERS WILLOW RUN AIRPORT

The Yankee Air Force National Headquarters, Museum, Hangar and Flight Line is located at historic Willow Run Airport, in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Willow Run was built in 1941 by the U.S. Army to be the air base for Ford Motor Companys B-24 bomber plant, located on the west side of the field. The airport was owned by the University of Michigan until the mid 1970s and is now owned and operated by the Wayne County Road Commission which strongly supports our efforts to preserve a part of the history of Willow Run and Southeastern Michigan, as well as historical aviation in general.

To drive to Headquarters from the East or South, exit from I-94 at Belleville Rd., drive North to Tyler Rd. (about 1 mile), turn left on Tyler, then turn right on Beck and proceed to the Airport entrance on Beck Rd. From the West or North, follow Ecorse to Beck Rd., turn South on Beck and proceed to the Airport entrance. The YAF is located in the Northernmost hangar on the east ramp.

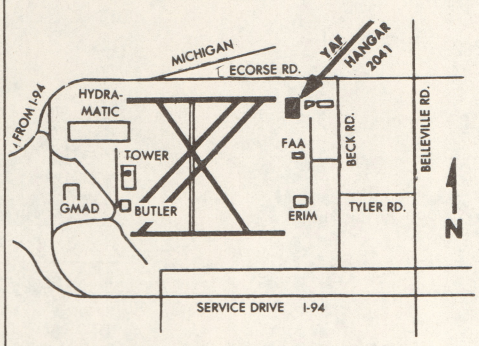
Headquarters is always open to all members who wish to visit or participate in restoration projects.

YANKEE AIRFORCE CALENDAR

It is becoming necessary to advance the deadline for the Newsletter and the Calendar. Therefore the accuracy of items appearing in the calendar cannot be guaranteed. If you plan to attend any particular meeting, please check with the chairperson to confirm the time and place.

Calendar deadlines are the same as the Newsletter deadlines. It is the responsibility of each Division to get calendar info to me by that deadline if you wish it included in the calendar.

Willow Run Airport
Yankee Air Force Headquarters



WILLOW RUN COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Aircraft Procurement ..... Dan Miller, 291-3431
Bookkeeper ..... Barb Sutton
C-47 Commander ..... Elmer Spencer, 485-8900
Finance ..... Nancy Lockwood, 482-4120
Fire Marshall ..... Bill Walter, 941-4073
Fund Raising .....
F-86D Commander ..... Scott Vetter, 721-3711
Hangar ..... Frank Modlinski
Hangar Rentals ..... T.J. Wilkins, 525-2616
Librarian ..... Barbara Cook
Maintenance Chief ..... Ron Haviland, 836-5732
Museum/Historian ..... Phil Lundy, 644-9171
Yankee Air Force News Ads .....
Pilot Certification ..... Mike LaPine, 485-7931
Photography ..... Jim Walters, 481-0320
RF 84K Commander ..... Mike Willman, 661-0440
Social Events ..... Pat Wilkins, 525-2616
Social Events ..... Audrey Ray, 729-0139
Supplies ..... Barb Sutton
Yankee Air Force News Editor ..... Phil Syler, 572-1779

YANKEE AIR FORCE DIVISIONS

Willow Run, YAF First Division
Hangar 2041 (A Street)
Willow Run Airport (east side)
P.O. Box 1100
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
313-483-4030

Meetings 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:30 - YAF Hangar. All Divisions are encouraged to participate in the meetings at Willow Run and to be a part of the activities at National Headquarters.

Northeast, YAF Second Division
Essex County Airport
125 Passaic Ave.
Fairfield, N.J. 07006
201-575-9621

Meetings 1st Wed. of each month, 7:30, 2nd floor, Essex County Improvement Authority Building.

Mid-Michigan, YAF Third Division
Flint Bishop Airport
G-3101 West Bristol Road
Flint, MI 48507

Meetings 2nd Wednesday of each month, 7:00, Skybolt Aviation Hangar, Bishop.

WI/IL State Line, YAF Fourth Div.
Blackhawk Airways Hangar
Rock County Airport
Highway 51 S.
Janesville, WI 53545

MEETING ROOM RENTALS

Rooms are now available in the Hangar for rental to other groups. The cost is $1.00 per person with a minimum of $25.00. A group must have a member who is also a member of the YAF, and Someone with a key must be present. Each application must be made to the Willow Run Division Board of Directors at least 45 days prior to the requested meeting night. The Board will then approve or deny the use of the room based on any conflict with YAF activities, conflict with lease agreements or activities or groups deemed to be in conflict with the goals of the YAF. The minimum $25.00 must be paid upon signing the rental contract, with the balance paid within 7 days after the meeting. Kitchen facilities may be used, but must be cleaned after use. It is the responsibility of the YAF member to insure that security is maintained and the rooms cleaned up afterwards.

AIR FAIRS

COMING ATTRACTIONS

JULY

2, 3	Detroit Renaissance Air Show, YAF participation planned (WR)
4	Ann Arbor Air Show, YAF participation (WR)
6	Willow Run Division Membership Meeting, 7:30 (WR) NE Division Membership Meeting, 7:30 (NE)
9, 10	Detroit City Air Show (WR)
12	YAF National Board Meeting, 7:30 (WR)
13	Mid-Michigan Division Membership Meeting, 7:00 (MMD) Deadline for additions to agenda for Willow Run Division Board Meeting
17	YAF Fly-In/Drive-In Picnic, Willow Run Airport. All divisions invited.
20	Willow Run Division Board Meeting, 7:30 (WR) Northeast Division Board Meeting, 7:30 (NE)
26	Wisconsin/Illinois Division Board Meeting, 7:00 (WI)
27	Mid-Michigan Division Board Meeting, 7:00 (MMD)

YAF AREA REPRESENTATIVES

Area Representatives have been selected to represent the Yankee Air Force in a particular area. Their purpose is to try to develope the publicity and interest in that area for a YAF Division. Please call them if you wish to participate.

West Michigan
Ed Teliczan YAF #231
P.O. Box 428
Baldwin, MI 49304
616-898-2387

Boston, Mass.
Rusty Restuccia YAF #345
100 Willard St.
Quincy, Mass. 02168
617-479-4678

Sioux City, Iowa
Don Keller
3305 Chalet Ct.
Sioux City, Iowa 51106
712-276-3847

Southern Illinois
Ray Teliczan Sr.
1313 Lincoln St.
Mascoutah, ILL 62258

If you have the interest in working to start a Division of the Yankee Air Force in your area, and are willing to be an Area Representative send your request to the Yankee Air Force at the Willow Run address or call Geoff Gerling, 881-7842.

MID-MICHIGAN DEDICATION AND FLY-IN PANCAKE BREAKFAST

by John J. Kondon

On May 7, 1983, members of the MMD met at Skybolt Aviation for a pre-fly-in work party. The mission of the group was to install snowfence barriers to contain the visiting aircraft, and also for crowd control measures. This was accomplished with the help of the MMD and visiting Willow Run Ramp Crew Members who came early to help us out. The Flint Fire Dept. showed up with a water truck to fill 55 gal. drums for securing the snow fence to something solid. All worked hard at this project until it was done. We were admiring our handiwork when out of nowhere a strong wind storm blew up, and you can guess what happened next, down went the fence and half of the barrels.

Well, we went bravely back out there and put it back together. Then went towards the hangar, and another storm hit, but this time it was wind and a torrent of hard rain. The decision was made to put the fence back up in the morning, after all, it was 68 degrees, no sweat. We went inside for a meeting with Richard Carpenter and the Willow Run Ramp Crew to find out what we were to do during the Fly-In the next morning, and get familiar with procedures we were to follow handling aircraft.

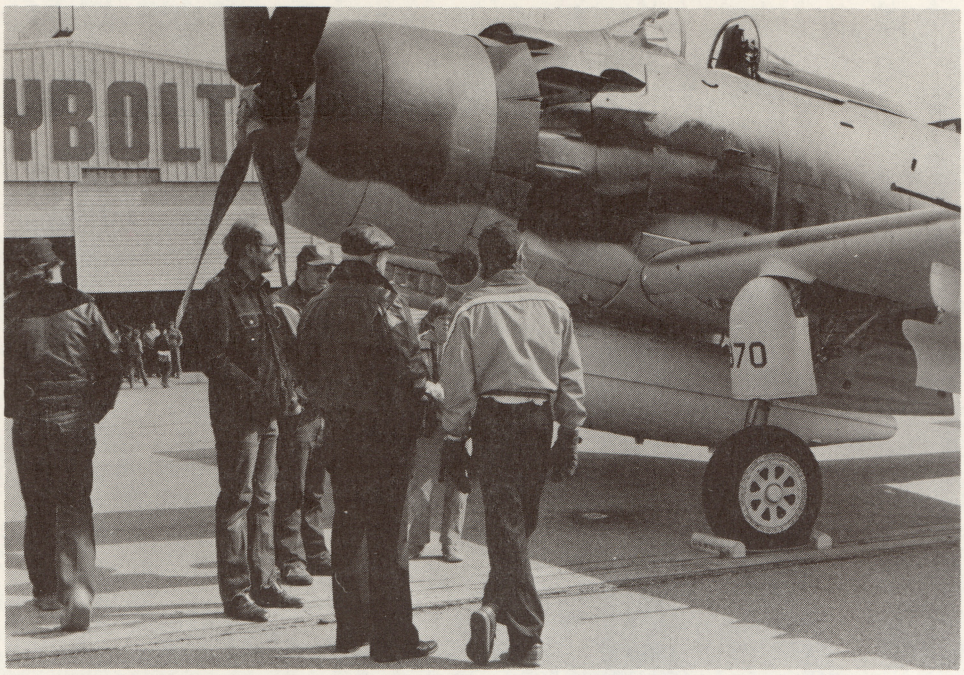
May 8, 1983, weather: 35 degrees, winds holding steady out of the North at 25-30 knots, sky, gray, overcast. Longjohn weather if ever there was any. Outlook: gloomy. Could anything fly? This is the day of the MMD Dedication Ceremony, spirits of the able bodied soul somewhat dampened, but resolute.

The grill fired up, the coffee pots churned, the retail sales trailer opened for action, pancakes hit the grill and sausages warmed the hangar with their enticing aroma. Recruiting people hit the stand with coffee in chilled hands, and so did everyone else who had a job to do.

The cold and the wind did not deter the MMD from its mission. We were going to have a Fly-In no matter what it took. Even though the weather was bad, people began to show up. They shivered as we did, but they had their breakfast with ample cups of coffee and stared out of the hangar waiting. Waiting for warbirds, and around 9 a.m. here comes

Dave Pettyes, Pres. MMD, gives award to Sister Toni Maria Dauner.

Mid-Michigan Dedication/Fly-In



A-4 gets a lookover.

a P-51 Mustang. If any person standing there in the cold thought there was to be no fly-in they were greatly mistaken. If a warbird of this calibre could make it, maybe others could. Then the word went out, a T-6 was coming, then another P-51. A T-6 landed a few minutes later, then the Air Raid Siren went off and confirmed the flight of a B-25 on its final approach and spirits soared. The wind was so high that the stearmans could not make the fly-in.

The aircraft activity around Bishop Airport, and the media exposure helped. Helicopter rides were available. People came from all over the MMD to watch, and see the warbirds. They stopped their cars to just look, and many pulled off of the road to come and see the warbirds first hand. The sun actually began to peek out between a cloud now and then. People were in the hangar looking at pictures and some of the museum articles on display, and the recruiting book was busy. We picked up eight new members, and many more were interested and impressed so, that they took brochures and newsletters and most important, membership applications home with them.

Dave Pettyes, Pres. MMD opened the ceremonies with a good talk of what this is all about and who we were and what we are trying to do. At this time he mentioned O. E. Williams, and the fact that Williams was the recipient of the MMD's First Annual Aviation Award.

Williams started the first flying school in Michigan. Sister Toni Maria Dauner, who's age I cannot mention at this time accepted the award. She knew Williams personally, and Williams tied his planes to trees in Sister Toni Maria's father's orchard trees in nearby Fenton. She gave a brief speech thanking everyone involved, and spoke of her knowledge of the pilots and aeroplanes that were taking off and landing in 1906.

After Dave made his presentation, it was Harry Terpstra's turn and he bent the crowds ear for a while and was enjoyed by all.

A quick glance skyward, it couldn't be! Blue was actually trying to force its way through the grey. By noon it warmed up to 40 degrees. The crowd was enjoying the static display of the birds, and the helicopter was taking people up for short rides constantly. No one saw him refuel, so it appeared that he was using air to fly on. The word spread that the B-25 would take passengers up for a short flight. They did it once, and it was a grand experience for those on board, because they did some talking about it and before you knew it, it was loaded up again and off it flew.

Local newspaper photographers had shown up, and crew also. We got local coverage on TV that night and in next day news. It was a busy time. The hours flew by pretty fast.

Around 2:30 the ramp was cleared of spectators, and the birds got ready to depart. The sky was 50/50 when the birds took off. They made their pitch to the control tower and received permission to do a little Fly-By. And brother did they do it! They beat up Bishop Airport in grand fashion, to the pleasure of everyone. 3:00 p.m. and it's all over. The birds are heading for home, the crowd gone and the clean-up starts. More work, but worth every minute of it. 6:00 p.m. - clean-up completed, retail sales trailer on its way back to Willow Run, snow fences taken down, and the pesky 55 gal. drums rolled back to their place. Sky: brilliant blue, no clowds, 50 degrees.

We of the MMD-YAF think we had a good Fly-In considering it was our first attempt. But, without the help of the Willow Run Division we could have done worse. Without their help, especially with ramp security, to coin a phrase it would have been a *"Chinese Fire Drill."*.

We thank all who were involved with this, our first public event.

Hangar Talk

May is finally here and along with it comes showers, warm breezes and lots of sunshine.

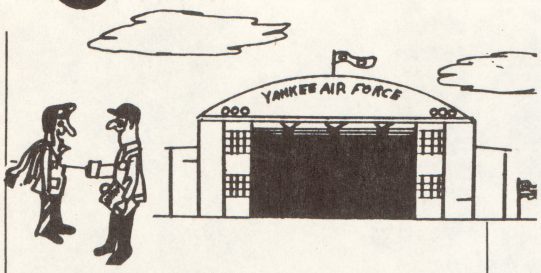
Great news, our F84K is on its wheels! Mike Willman, the F84 squadron commander, with the help of our ramp crew, assembled the landing gear, reattached the wings to the fuselage and rolled the plane out of our hangar and onto the ramp. Great job, guys!.

The fly-ins started with Mid-Michigan Division having their first Open House and Dedication Ceremony, May 5, with over 1,000 people attending this event. Other than Flints Bishop Airport Air Shows in recent years, that Sunday the airport was busier than anyone can remember. Many YAF members from Willow Run Division showed up and pitched in to make this show a great success. It was a day that the Mid-Michigan Division will long remember.

YAF Willow Run Division had its third annual Fly-In and drive-in breakfast, May 15th; and it was a huge success. Flap jacks and coffee never seemed to stop.

The weather was cool and breezy as can be, but over 90 aircraft showed up. Private aircraft, Warbirds, including an AD4N, Skyraider; B-25; T-6s and the Stearmans of Michigan. The Stearmans flew in from New Hudson Airport, with seven beautifully restored PT-17s led by Lou Spanberger. What a great sight it was to see them lined up on the ramp, starting their engines on command and taking off in formation.

The special event on this day was the opening of the YAF Museum and Library for use by YAF members and the public. Chairman Phil Lundy and his committee deserve a great round of applause for all their hard work leading up to this day!



HANGAR AND ROOM RENTALS

The Yankee Air Force Hangar is available for aircraft rentals and room rentals. If you are a member and own an aircraft which is a military aircraft or you own a civilian aircraft which is at least 30 years old, you may wish to rent space for your plane in the YAF Hangar. Rents help fund the restoration and operation of the Hangar. Contact Greg Smith, 487-5965 for information.

Y.A.F. FLIGHTLINE
THE NORTHROP GAMMA
by Jim Hanford

Most aviation buffs, if asked to select a single aircraft type which made the greatest contribution to both military and civil aircraft design of today, would probably pick the Douglas DC-3/C-47, or else its forerunner, the DC-1. Yet a convincing case can be made that the forerunner of the DC-1 was the Northrop Gamma. I will attempt to show that the Gamma did indeed have a profound influence, both on the DC series, and on the Douglas SBD "Dauntless" dive bomber, which contributed so much to the winning of the war in the Pacific.

The major innovations of the Gamma were its monocoque fuselage, which employed an aluminum alloy stressed skin, and its multi-cellular wing, supported in part by its own skin. The Gamma was the creation of Jack Northrop, but it was also the culmination of design innovations proven in his earlier designs — the Lockheed Vega and the Northrop Alpha.

Jack Northrop was born in 1895. The world's first aircraft with a monocoque fuselage, the Deperdussin racer, won the Schneider Cup Race in 1913, the same year that Northrop graduated from high school. The Deperdusin's fuselage was made in half-shells, consisting of thin strips of tulip wood glued over formers. Next the two layers of fabric were doped over the outside, another over the inside, and the two halves joined together. The resulting structure was light and strong; it lent itself to streamlining; and it offered greater interior room for fuel and payload. Its main drawback was that it was expensive and difficult to manufacture. With the advent of World War I, when aircraft and craftsmen were needed in large numbers. the wooden-framed-and-fabric-covered fuselage was the logical solution. Over a decade later Jack Northrop would appreciate the inherent advantages of monocoque construction, and he would ultimately apply those techniques to metal. In 1916 Northrop got a job as a draftsman for the Loughhead Airplane Mfg. Co. When that company folded in 1921, Jack was hired by Donald Douglas as a carpenter. A few months later, he became the second engineer in the engineering department, where he designed the fuel tanks for the DT World Cruiser. In 1927, Northrop left Douglas to join the Loughhead brothers in the reorganized Lockheed Aircraft Corporation.

That same year, he began preliminary drawings of what would become the Vega. The Vega featured a stressed plywood skin, single spar, cantilever wing, situated above a cylindrical, wooden monocoque fuselage, which enabled a host of pilots to set records. Art Goebel, Wiley Post, Amelia Earhart, Roscoe Turner, Jimmy Doolittle, and Frank Hawks all flew Vegas. It was truly the shape of things to come — a whole series of Lockheed designs, such as the Air Express, the Orion, the Altair, and the Sirius, used the same basic wing and fuselage designs.

In 1929 Lockheed was taken over by the Detroit Aircraft Corporation, a holding company with grandiose ideas of becoming the General Motors of the aviation industry. Northrop left to form his own company, the Avion Corporation, in Burbank, California. By this time an aluminum alloy, 17ST Alclad, had evolved as a reliable structural material, which Northrop incorporated into the design of the Alpha, a low wing monoplane. In addition to the circular, aluminum alloy, monocoque fuselage, the Alpha's wing was composed of several spars which intersected the ribs to form boxes, hence the term "multi-cellular." Although few Alphas were sold, TWA bought 13 of the silver aircraft for coast-to-coast, 22-hour air mail service, and Northrop became a household word. The sole remaining Alpha hangs in the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

Unfortunately the country was still in a depression. Avion was sold in 1929, and Northrop subsequently left to form the first Northrop Corporation, which produced yet another limited edition, the Beta. In 1932, the company was reorganized with the financial assistance of Donald Douglas. That year the Gamma was born.

Structurally, the design was years ahead of its time. Six spars helped form

The Gamma 2B, shown with the Junkers type "floating aileron," which was subsequently removed. This aircraft was a two-seater, and was later reconfigured as a seaplane by the substitution of two Edo floats for the landing gear. (Photo via Westburg.)

the multi-cellular wing. The outer wings were bolted to the center section through pairs of extruded attach angles butted together. A metal cap strip covered the external joint. The same wing design appeared on the DC-1, 2, and 3, and on the SBD. Split flaps were included to reduce landing speeds, and from these evolved the "Swiss cheese" dive brakes which were so predominant on the Dauntless. Tail surfaces were of the same multi-cellular design. Both the elevators and rudder had trim tabs, but only the former was adjustable in flight.

The round fuselage was constructed of aluminum longitudinal stiffeners attached to semi-circular frames, and covered by stressed aluminum alloy skin. 17ST Alclad was used initially, however later models achieved a considerable weight savings by changing to 24SRT. The wing-fuselage intersection had a generous fillet, which significantly lowered drag. Each main gear, which were mounted just inboard of the wing joint, included a pair of oleos, and were enclosed in large, telescoping fairings.

The first Gamma was test flown in December, 1932. This machine was purchased by Texaco for use by Frank Hawks in breaking distance records. The craft cruised at 220 mph, and had a 2,500 mile range. Top speed at 7,000 feet was 248 mph. Few aircraft, including those of the military could match that performance in 1933, and Frank Hawks proceeded to set new records. Nevertheless, its flight characteristics were so good that it could be flown hands-off for hours.

The second Gamma, purchased by Lincoln Ellsworth was christened the **Polar Star**, was used in his attempt to fly over the South Pole. The plane ran out of gas within 25 miles of the pole, and Ellsworth finished the journey on foot. The **Polar Star** was eventually recovered, and today it rests in the NASM's Silver Hill Facility.

A total of 62 Gammas were built between 1932 and 1937. Although some were "one of" varients, 51 Models 2E were produced, 36 of which went to China. They carried a crew of two, and three .30 caliber machine guns, as well as 1,000 pounds of bombs. The sole Model 2F became the prototype for 241 Northrop A-17 attack bombers.

SPECIFICATIONS

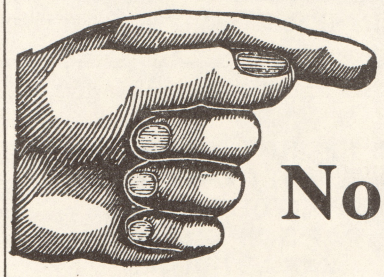
Gamma 2E with 775 hp
Wright Cyclone SR-1820-F-52 engine

Span, 47 ft., 9 in.; Length, 31 ft., 2 in.; Height, 9 ft., 0 in.; Empty weight, 4100 lbs.; Gross weight, 7350 lbs.; Maximum speed, 223 mph at 6300 ft.; Cruising speed, 204 mph at 2100 rpm and 15,000 ft.; Cruising range, 1970 miles; Service ceiling, 23,400 ft.; Rate of climb, 1390 ft./min.

SOURCES

Boyne, Walter J.; The Aircraft Treasures of Silver Hill; New York — 1982.
Westburg, Peter W.; The Gallant Gamma; **Airpower**, May 1973
; **Days of Trial and Triumph — A Pictorial History of Lockheed;** Lockheed Aircraft Corporation — 1969

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of conflicts with airshows, the necessary interviewing and research required for profiling a member's aircraft were not possible in time for our July deadline. We will present another member's aircraft profile next month.



Northeast Division

The Northeast Division's shop is now finished and work is being devoted to furnishing it with tools. As a result of the shop's completion, restoration work can now procede on the Division's projects. Perhaps the biggest project and one that will be receiving the most attention will be that of the L-13 Aircraft restoration.

At the first meeting of the L-13 Flight held on April 12, procedures and methods were established for the accomplishment of the restoration. It was decided by those present that a "pure" restoration would be attempted to be made. That is, the aircraft will be restored as it came from the factory and not with later radial engine modifications of larger horsepower.

The Northeast Division is looking forward to the up-coming Air Show season and is preparing for them with its' exhibits at a rapid pace.

To help with Division finances, member John Serchio, who is a former Marine pilot and owner of a T-34 Mentor aircraft, has graciously offered a one hour flight each month in his aircraft to be used as a prize in a raffle run by the Division. This will go a long way towards helping to pay for the rent of the Division quarters.

The Northeast Division and its efforts were spotlighted recently in an article appearing in the Newark Star-Ledger column, *"Wings Over Jersey"* by the well known aviation writer, Jack Elliott. This publicity helped to bring in quite a few new members.

DONATIONS

We announced a number of donations prior to the Fly-In in our newsletter. Now we would like to add the following:

Don Sutton made and donated cash/ticket boxes for the Finance Committee to use at all of our functions.

Red Partin donated his Navion for the day so T.J. could bring in revenue giving rides.

Joan and Bill Willmann brought in all the geraniums that decorated our tables at the Fly-In.

Pat Jasmer coordinated all the donations from Burger King, Taco Bell, and others.

Our folding tables were used for the first time at our Fly-In. They were made by Ray Gillman and Rich Hapunowicz and assembled by a group of our membership. Having our own tables saves the YAF a lot of money. Thank you Ray and Rich for a BIG job well done.

Mack McCarthy donated paint to cover our new tables. People will be needed to paint the tables so please call the hanger, 483-4030, between 11 and 5 to volunteer for a painting party. WE NEED YOU!!!

SUNDAY, JULY 17, 1983
TIME: 12 P.M. to 5 P.M.
YANKEE AIR FORCE PICNIC

FEATURING:

Dancing, Clowns,
Balloons and Airplane Rides.
With David Hagemeier as our D.J.
Playing the Records.

WE'LL PROVIDE: Hot Dogs, Coney Islands, Chips, Ice Cream, Pop and Beer.

We provide the food and beverages, you bring yourselves, a good appetite, a real thirst for an enjoyable day at the Hangar, rain or shine.

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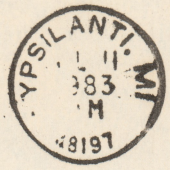

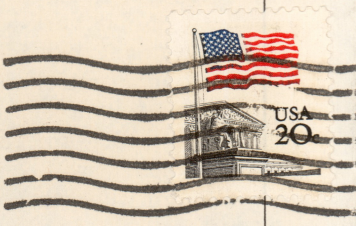

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